Ministry of
Children and Family Development

2016/17 – 2018/19
SERVICE PLAN

February 2016

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Minister
Accountability Statement

The *Ministry of Children and Family Development 2016/17 - 2018/19 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

Honourable Stephanie Cadieux
Minister of Children and Family Development
February 16, 2016

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry works together with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal service partners and approximately 5400 contracted community social service agencies and foster homes, cross government and social sector partners to deliver inclusive, culturally respectful, responsive and accessible services that support the well-being of children, youth and families. The primary focus is to support vulnerable children and their families using a client-centred approach to service delivery that builds on the family's existing resources and capacities. Services are delivered in a respectful, compassionate, strengths-based and culturally appropriate manner to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Ministry services are complementary and families may access a combination of services delivered through: Early Years Services; Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs; Child and Youth Mental Health Services; Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services; Adoption Services and Youth Justice Services. Ministry programs and services are coordinated through a provincial office located in Victoria and are delivered through 13 geographic Service Delivery Areas. For information on specific programs and services, visit the Ministry of Children and Family Development internet site.

Strategic Direction and Context

Strategic Direction

Over the past few years, the ministry's focus on strategic priorities and key actions aimed at improving services to children, youth and families have provided a strong foundation, a well-defined structure and a clearer sense of direction. MCFD continues to support government priorities, like the Early Years Strategy and Violence Free BC initiative, while making strategic and manageable changes to support practice and to make a difference for children, youth and families within a challenging fiscal environment and changing demographics.

The Minister's Mandate Letter speaks to Government's priorities and a commitment to continuously improve social programs to ensure that children and families have the opportunities they need to be successful. MLA Jane Thornthwaite is supporting the Minister as Parliamentary Secretary for Child Mental Health and Anti-Bullying.

Government's commitment to delivering services well and affordably, as outlined in the Taxpayer Accountability Principles, is reflected throughout this three year plan, which focuses on working together to explore more efficient and effective ways of providing ministry programs and services.

Strategic Context

The Economic Forecast Council expects British Columbia's real GDP to grow by 2.7 per cent in 2016 and 2.6 per cent in 2017. Downside risks to BC's economic outlook include the potential for a slowdown in North American economic activity, ongoing fragility in Europe, and slower than anticipated Asian demand, particularly in China. Additional risks include uncertainty in the outlook for the Canadian dollar and weak inflation.

In response to these challenging economic times, the Government of BC remains committed to controlled spending and the implementation of initiatives to support a leaner and more efficient organization.

The ministry is supporting Government's overall fiscal discipline through effective budget management, undertaking process improvement activities as part of the cross-government Lean initiative and clarifying and prioritizing its strategic work. This repositioning and efficient use of ministry services supports the goal of making the best use of available resources.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Eleven performance measures appear in this Service Plan; however, many other performance indicators are tracked and publicly available through the ministry's Performance Management Report.

Goal 1: Improve safety and well-being outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families.

Objective 1.1: Improve and strengthen services to Aboriginal children, youth and their families by increasingly reflecting an indigenous perspective in policies, practices and services.

To support strong working relationships with Aboriginal families, communities and leadership and to improve and strengthen services for Aboriginal people, the ministry will focus on the following short and longer term strategies:

Strategies

- Strengthen relationships in each Service Delivery Area with local Aboriginal leadership, bands, and communities
- Cultivate constructive and collaborative partnerships with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies
- Build relationships with other Aboriginal agencies
- Implement the Aboriginal Practice and Policy Framework
- Increase Aboriginal staff through a recruitment and retention project for positions across the Ministry
- Deliver cultural competency training as part of core training for new child welfare social workers hired and move to expand to all child welfare staff
- Continue to work with federal government partners to ensure equitable and culturally safe child and family services for Aboriginal children, youth and their families

Performance Measure 1: Rate of Aboriginal children and youth in care per 1000 population

Performance Measure	2014/15 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Rate of Aboriginal children and youth in care per 1000 population	55.6	55.2	54.9	54.5	54.0

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM and Resource and Payment System

Discussion

Strategies that focus on family preservation and permanency for children and youth will reduce the rate of Aboriginal children in care, as demonstrated in this new measure.

Performance Measure 2: Aboriginal children cared for in Aboriginal communities

Performance Measure	2008/09 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Of the Aboriginal children having to leave their parental home, the percent that receive services* delivered by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal friends and family	54.3%	61.0%	64.0%	64.0%	64.0%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM and Resource and Payment System

* Includes in-care and out-of-care guardianship services

Discussion

The well-being of Aboriginal children and youth who have to leave their parental home depends on their receiving services that strongly connect them to their culture and traditions. This measure is the proportion of those children served by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, or receiving ministry services delivered by Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal people.

Goal 2: Achieve permanency for children and youth in care and support transitions to adulthood

Objective 2.1: Children and youth in care will have a culturally meaningful and permanent relationship with a caring adult

Children and youth require a stable and continuous relationship with a nurturing person to help them grow into healthy, responsible and successful adults. As part of the continued focus on permanency for children and youth in care, the ministry will:

Strategies

- In partnership with Aboriginal communities, work to improve permanency planning to secure a culturally safe, caring and forever family for Aboriginal children and youth already in care, and to support families to raise their child/children in their communities
- Support the work of the Special Advisor on Aboriginal Child Welfare
- Implement policy to support and strengthen permanency practice

- Embed permanency training in the guardianship training curriculum and deliver guardianship training
- Increase the number and timeliness of permanency placements for children and youth, including adoptions, out of care placements and, where possible, family reunification
- Continue development of public facing web portal to streamline the process of approving and supporting adoptive parents

Performance Measure 3: Children and Youth in Care who achieved permanency

Performance Measure	2014/15 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percent of children and youth in care who achieved permanency	19.6%	21.6%	21.8%	22.0%	22.2%

Data Source: Adoption Management System and ICM

Discussion

Permanence is achieved by leaving the care of the Director of Child Welfare through return to family, adoption or permanent transfer of custody under the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA). This new measure is the proportion of children and youth in care more than two months that achieved permanency over the twelve month fiscal year.

Performance Measure 4: Children and youth placed for adoption

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percent of children and youth with adoption plans who have been placed	12.3%	23.5%	23.0%	22.5%	22.5%

Data Source: Adoption Management System

Discussion

This adoption measure is included in Performance Measure #3. While a plan for adoption is developed once it is decided that adoption is the best long term plan for a child in care, placement occurs when a child first moves in with prospective adoptive parents. An adoption order is only granted once all !egal issues are addressed and a successful six month placement has occurred.

The ministry strives to maximize the number of adoptions, however the trend in this measure is slightly downwards because there is a declining number of Continuing Custody Order wards (CCOs) and CCOs are becoming older on average. Also, the proportion of CCOs that are Aboriginal is becoming larger.

Performance Measure 5: Children whose grade is appropriate for their age

Performance Measure	2010/11 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percent of children in care whose grade level is appropriate for their age	80.2%	86.3%	87.2%	88.1%	89.0%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM and Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Educational attainment is an excellent barometer of the overall well-being of children. Additional physical and developmental challenges and adverse circumstances and experiences, including trauma, increase the risk of children and youth not progressing in school during their adolescence. The proportion of children and youth in care whose grade level is appropriate for their age is a good measure of whether the system of support for children in care ameliorates the impact of these additional vulnerabilities.

This measure is the percent of all children in care and in school, who are at most five years older than their grade. For example, a child six years of age before the end of December is typically in grade one.

Objective 2.2: Youth and young adults are prepared for adulthood

To ensure those youth who do not find legal permanency are prepared for transitioning to adulthood, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Develop a ministry youth framework
- Propose regulatory changes to Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) and identify needed AYA policy and practice changes
- Develop a cross-ministry Youth Action Plan to support youth transitions

Performance Measure 6: Completed High School with a Credential

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percent of youth in care who turn 19 with a high school credential	47.4%	52.7%	54.2%	55.7%	57.2%	58.7%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM, and Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Education is a key determinant of long term well-being and social inclusion. These strategies contribute towards supporting youth and young adults for transition to adulthood. The proportion of youth in care who attain a high school credential by age 19 and are at an age appropriate level is a

good measure of whether the system of support for youth in care supports their education. This measure includes all youth in care by court order under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

Goal 3: Standardize and improve ministry services

Objective 3.1: Implement the Early Years Strategy to better support families with young children.

The Provincial Office for the Early Years monitors the implementation of the Early Years Strategy, which is focused on the goals of improved accessibility, affordability, quality and coordination. To support the implementation of early years initiatives, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Continue to expand the network of Early Years Centres
- Continue to fund the creation of up to 13,000 new licensed child care spaces by 2020 to improve child care availability
- Continue to redesign web-based information related to early years programs and services
- Implement a provincial curriculum guide for Early Childhood Education in BC

Performance Measure 7: Licensed child care spaces

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Number of licensed child care spaces	98,432	102,300	104,000	106,000	108,000

Data Source: Child Care Operating Funding Program Datamart

Discussion

This measure speaks to the average monthly number of licensed spaces approved for funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program. Increasing the number of child care spaces across BC is an objective of the Early Years Strategy.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen coordination and collaboration of services and supports to families affected by domestic violence.

To support coordination, strengthen services and improve the effectiveness of the systemic response for families affected by domestic violence:

Strategies

- The Provincial Office of Domestic Violence will continue to monitor the third year of the three-year Provincial Domestic Violence Plan

- In partnership with the Ministry of Health, the ministry will continue to expand the Safe Relationships, Safe Children project province-wide, inclusive of Aboriginal communities
- The ministry will continue to support the Ministry of Justice to expand the number of provincial Domestic Violence Units

Objective 3.3: Improve consistency and accessibility of Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN), Child and Youth Mental Health Services (CYMH) and Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services.

The ministry supports families to access services and programs and will improve cross-sectoral coordination for new and existing programs. Over the next 3 years MCFD will:

Strategies

- Continue to lead a cross-ministerial working group with the Ministries of Health and Education on the effectiveness and coordination of the provision of autism services for children and youth in BC
- Continue to review policy and business processes in order to ensure consistency of CYSN services
- Continue cross-ministry work to review and define CYMH services
- Continue to expand the use of tele-mental health to improve access to a variety of services and supports, particularly in rural and remote communities
- Ensure consistency in assessing child protection reports and in determining the most appropriate response
- Implement practice guidelines for working with children and youth with complex care needs and trauma informed practice guidelines to support a system-wide approach for working with children and youth impacted by violence and trauma

Performance Measure 8: Tele-mental health sessions

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Total number of tele-mental health sessions	24	257	325	350	400

Data Source: BC Children's Hospital

Discussion

Tele-mental health sessions increase access to psychiatric consultation closer to home for children and youth living in rural and remote areas through direct clinical tele-health consultations with psychiatrists located at BC Children's Hospital in Vancouver. This measure is an indicator of the growth of tele-health practice.

Performance Measure 9: Ratio of FDR to Investigation

Performance Measure	2011/12 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Ratio of Family Development Responses to Investigations	0.46	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5

Data Source: ICM

Discussion

Family Development Response (FDR) is an alternate response to investigation that focuses on keeping a child safe while living in the family home and works to address safety issues by building on the family's strengths and support system. This performance measure compares the use of FDR to the use of investigations. The ratio rises as the use of FDR increases and the use of investigations decreases. For example, a ratio of 5.0 means that five times more FDRs were completed than investigations.

Objective 3.4: Redesign ministry services to ensure staff can focus on the needs of children, youth and families in their communities.

To address workload issues for front line staff and improve safety, well-being and permanency outcomes for children, youth and families, MCFD will:

Strategies

- Implement and evaluate a new Service Delivery Redesign approach to address workload issues
- Consider recommendations to improve child protection related policy, standards and practice

Objective 3.5: Expand quality assurance activities to ensure a high quality of practice.

The current functions of the ministry's Quality Assurance system include case reviews, practice audits, administrative reviews, complaints and reportable circumstances. To expand and evaluate these activities to ensure improvements to practice and policy, as well as quality assurance relating to contract management and procurement, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Continue to develop a practice audit process for CYSN, CYMH and Youth Justice
- Continue an aggregate analysis on findings from all Quality Assurance activities
- Continue to make improvements to the quality assurance/audit and performance measurement of Service Providers

Goal 4: Develop and strengthen residential care and treatment services

Objective 4.1: Align residential care & treatment services to meet the needs of children and youth in care.

To create a more integrated, accessible and evidence-informed residential care and treatment system of services, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Improve planning to ensure appropriate placements that meet the care and treatment needs of children and youth
- Continue to develop and deliver training for resource workers

Objective 4.2: Strengthen the system of care for children and youth, including foster care, kinship care and out of care options.

To develop and support quality family based care, kinship care and out of care options, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Review and recommend changes to the current foster care system in BC
- Continue to assess and update current foster care policies and implement changes
- Standardize business processes and tools to support expansion of common assessment tool for out-of-care options and restricted foster care approval process
- Continue to develop and implement enhanced caregiver training
- Strengthen the provincial campaign on awareness and recruitment of foster caregivers, with an emphasis on Aboriginal caregivers, and multicultural caregivers

Performance Measure 10: Placement Stability for children in care

Performance Measure	2008/09 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Percent of children in "out of home care" for at least two years who experienced no change in placement	54.1%	62.6%	63.1%	63.6%	64.1%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM and Resource and Payment System

Discussion

Placement stability is essential for children and youth in care to develop secure attachment to a caregiver – a fundamental determinant of their well-being – and a sense of belonging. Evidence shows

that children and youth are more stable in placements where foster parents are well trained and supported; attachment to a caregiver for children under six can occur within as little as two to three months, taking only slightly longer for older children and youth.

Some placement changes are necessary and can be beneficial in terms of ensuring the right fit for the child or youth, but generally avoiding or minimizing moves while in care is an important goal.

In this measure, "out of home care" includes children living with foster parents or with relatives for protection reasons. This measure is the proportion of these children who remain in the same placement for at least two years.

The breakout table below provides more in-depth information about number of moves over a one and two year period. A child or youth in care that has to mov is likely to do so in their first year of care, so preventing moves early in care is key.

	Did not Move 2014/15	Moved Once 2014/15	Moved 2 or more times 2014/15
Percent of children in "out of home care" for at least two years by # of changes in placement	61.4%	20.8%	17.8%
Percent of children and youth in their first year of care by # of changes in placement	66.3%	21.6%	12.1%

Performance Measure 11: Foster Parent Retention

Performance Measure	2013/14 Baseline	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
Proportion of foster parents aged 64 years or younger that continued to foster one year later	76.9%	77.5%	78.0%	78.5%	79.0%

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, ICM and Resource and Payment System

Discussion

Effective support for foster parents is a significant factor in their decision to continue fostering over time. The effectiveness of this support will be reflected in rates of retention for foster parents from year to year. This new performance measure looks at the proportion of foster parents that are caregiving on March 31st each year that continue to foster one year later.

Objective 4.3: Support children and youth with complex care needs.

To provide effective and timely responses to children and youth assessed with complex care needs, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Continue to implement trauma informed intervention model throughout the province

Goal 5: A Healthy Workplace Where Employees are Engaged and Supported.

Objective 5.1: Engage employees in creating a healthy and an efficient workplace.

To involve employees in developing efficient and effective ways of providing programs and services, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Implement the recommendations from *Our Workplace Strategy* to support an efficient workplace
- Continue to embed 'Lean Where You Work' and support Lean capacity building

Objective 5.2: Improve employee recruitment and retention.

To effectively address recruitment and retention, the ministry will:

Strategies

- Complete a workforce analysis to identify critical job positions within the ministry that support its business priorities
- Conduct a focused debrief and staff engagement on the results of the 2015 Workplace Engagement Survey

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2015/16 Restated Estimates[1]	2016/17 Estimates	2017/18 Plan	2018/19 Plan
Operating Expenses ($000)				
Early Years Services	301,507	305,879	305,957	306,100
Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs	285,460	303,568	305,761	309,271
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	80,141	80,374	81,521	82,504
Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services	501,969	536,918	550,392	558,468
Adoption Services	27,728	30,678	30,806	30,912
Youth Justice Services	44,718	45,157	46,067	46,845
Service Delivery Support	118,429	133,820	136,189	137,094
Executive and Support Services	18,975	14,766	15,072	15,174
Total	**1,378,927**	**1,451,160**	**1,471,765**	**1,486,368**
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) ($000)				
Service Delivery Support	2,379	1,519	1,132	1,132
Total	**2,379**	**1,519**	**1,132**	**1,132**

Core Business Area	2015/16 Restated Estimates[1]	2016/17 Estimates	2017/18 Plan	2018/19 Plan
Other Financing Transactions ($000)				
Executive and Support Services (Human Services Providers Financing Program)				
Receipts	31	31	31	31
Disbursements	0	0	0	0
Net Cash (Requirements)	31	31	31	31
Total Receipts	**31**	**31**	**31**	**31**
Total Disbursements	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total Net Cash Source (Requirements)	**31**	**31**	**31**	**31**

[1] For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2015/16 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2016/17 Estimates. Note: There were no restatements required for this planning cycle.

Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ministry Contact Information

General Ministry Enquiries:

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Appendix B: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

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Ministry's Homepage

Residential Review Project - Final Report

Performance Management Report

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Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

Representative for Children and Youth